TESTIMONY OF
MAJOR JAY SHELDON
NORTH DAKOTA NATIONAL GUARD
BEFORE THE
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
15 MARCH 2023
HOUSE BILL 1398

Chairman Elkin and members of the committee, I am Jay Sheldon, Strategy and Policy Officer for the North Dakota National Guard (NDNG). I am here today to provide testimony in support of HB 1398.

In today's rapidly advancing technology landscape, computer science skills are in high demand across all industries, including the military. A strong understanding of computer science can open a wide range of career opportunities for students after graduation. An opportunity that we would like them to consider is the military, specifically the North Dakota Army and Air National Guard.

The National Guard would benefit from a computer education requirement in two ways. First, the NDNG has 31 (6 full-time and 25 part-time) open computer science related positions we are constantly trying to fill and second, the technology used in today's military requires many of our soldiers and airmen to be proficient in various computer science related tasks.

The North Dakota Army and Air National Guard employs 83 full-time and 291 part-time employees in information technology/computer science positions. As the military continues to grow its cyber security force there is a need to produce more individuals with these capabilities.

All military missions rely heavily on technology and computer systems for communication and navigation is critical for the military's long-term success. Unfortunately, current data of individuals that take the ASVAB, the standardized test used to assist the military with career placement, technology is area where local test takers have had lower performance, at least partially evident by our open positions.

A great way to grow the pool of people capable to fill the growing need is to expose them to computer science throughout their primary educational experience. To fill our positions and those across all industries we support HB 1398.

Thank you and I will stand for questions.